6: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1967) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Membership in one or more of these organizations created loyalties that cut across the ties of kinship and band affiliation, and helped to contribute to tribal solidarity. In other words, a person identified first with his kinsmen and with his band, but later established additional and potentially conflicting ties of loyalty by marrying someone from another band and by membership in a society that drew its members from many bands.

Band and tribal leadership was not inherited but open to all who could command a following. A band headman gained a position of influence by displaying the qualities (see below) valued in his society and by his continued exercise of these attributes. His influence depended upon his power to persuade others, and the support of many followers increased this ability. He conferred with family heads and all decisions were reached by mutual agreement.

Band leaders formed a council during the tribal encampment and one of them, by election or selection, came to be considered the chief of the tribe. The chief had no institutionalized authority and little disciplining power. His chiefly functions were to guide the council to agreement and to mediate in cases of conflict and uncertainty.

There were no formalized institutions for social control except for the policing duties of the associations under special regulations put into effect at the summer encampment. Conflict was first of all a matter between individuals, then a concern of the families and finally of the bands. The delinquent person was cautioned, ridiculed, gossiped about, and shamed into conformity. Ostracism and violence were the ultimate penalties within the band, but usually gossip and shame served to restore order. Boys and girls growing up in Piegan society were urged to achieve the ideals of that society. Boys were told to be brave, to be good fighters, able to defend themselves against their peers and to protect younger children. They were praised for skills and daring, even for sexual exploits. Girls were urged to be quiet, dutiful, sober, hard-working, and to protect their virginity.[7] Both were rewarded with praise when they achieved, and punished with sarcasm and gossiped about when they misbehaved or failed. These sanctions contributed to a developing concern with their own identity and to a strong sense of shame, and such concerns in turn gave added force to these mechanisms of social control. Gossip and shame were also used to curb intratribal conflicts among adults. A cluster of tepees made an ideal setting for effective ridicule. Wissler (1911:24) describes a process of "formal ridicule" that was used to curb "mild persistent misconduct." When the people were quietly settled in of an evening, a headman would call out to a neighbor asking him if he had heard about that silly fellow two tepees down who had been mistreating his wife? Men in other tepees would join in telling what they thought of the man and his behavior, all to the discomfort of the victim and the enjoyment of everyone else. Sarcasm, ridicule, and the accompanying laughter, added up to an evening of entertainment for all but the victim, who was soon highly motivated to mend his ways.

[7] The double standard in ideal sexual relations set up some strains; in order for one sex to achieve the other had to fall short of the ideal. I gather from the literature that there was a mix of failure and success in the attainment of these ideals on the part of both boys and girls (Ewers 1958:98).

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

might be ended by a payment of horses to the family of the deceased. Thus it was possible for a wealthy man literally to get away with murder, although he would not enhance his popularity by doing so.

Frequent changes in band allegiance brought together in one residential community people without blood relationship closer than that of second cousins. Marriage between such persons was permitted. In fact, the fathers and mothers of several of my older Blackfoot informants were members of the same band at the time of their marriages.

Young men enjoyed remarkable freedom in their sexual life. They accosted girls while they were alone gathering wood or water on the outskirts of camp. They bragged of their conquests, particularly if they had had an affair with a married woman. Chastity before marriage was more an ideal than a reality for many girls. Yet a girl who earned a reputation for being too free with her favors might have to be satisfied with marrying a poor boy whose future prospects were equally poor.

Faint-hearted lovers, or more aggressive ones whose advances were repulsed by the girls of their choice, sometimes employed love medicines to bring them success in their amorous endeavors. These were secret formulae concocted by specialists for a fee. Because the Cree Indians were famous for these medicines, the Blackfeet referred to love medicine as "Cree Medicine." There were many varieties. One such medicine called for making two little birch bark images, one representing a man and the other a woman. A stick was dipped in the liquid medicine, then touched to the hearts of the male and female figures. This magic was certain to make the girl long for the company of her as yet unsuccessful lover. So powerful were love medicines reputed to be that resistance to them was considered useless.

Fathers and mothers were ambitious for their daughters to marry well. It was not uncommon for the father of a little girl to tell a successful warrior, "When my daughter is old enough, she will be your wife." The marriage might not take place for a decade. Elk-Hollering-in-the-Water told me she was promised

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

another."[187] More leniency was shown to the partner in sin. Maximilian continues, "Often he avenges himself on the paramour, takes away his horse or other valuable property, to which he must submit quietly."[188] Today infidelity, or suspicion of it, are also severely punished. Beatings are frequent; one old lady still carefully conceals her mutilated face behind her shawl; and Big Head, recently released from prison, killed his wife because rumors of her misconduct had reached him during his confinement.[189]

Absence from home is perhaps the greatest threat to a man's marital peace. His present fears echo attitudes of the past, grounded in an economy that made more or less long separations between husband and wife inevitable. The small raiding or hunting parties, which might include the husband, left plenty of men available for romance. Today, although life is more sedentary, dwellings are isolated. A few hours in the field, a trip to town, are enough to kindle the flame. But it is the jail sentence, that frequent experience, which most nearly approximates the extended absences of a former time. Legal protection from a surprise return adds to the safety of wifely adventure; it also intensifies the fears of the ever-suspicious husband.

Some few women are notoriously jealous of their husbands, but primarily it is the men who exhibit the greatest sexual insecurity. A man who shows no jealousy is considered brave; yet a young mother eager to see her son of six become a good fighter will proudly encourage him when he shakes his fist in fury at an old medicine man whom he considers his "rival." From earliest babyhood, a child is exposed to the violent quarrels of his parents. He hears his mother's virtue assailed; he sees his father beat her for misbehavior. Against such a background and such conditioning, traditionally desirable attitudes are achieved with difficulty. In this society, jealousy has become obsessional; even chiefs find it difficult to act within the prescribed pattern, and serious lapses are not unknown.

Few men trust their wives. A seemingly contented husband of twenty years will, at the first sign of anger, hurl accusations of infidelity at his mate. One husband refuses to permit his wife to remove her shawl in her own house for fear she will succumb to the casual advances of some passerby. Another will suspect his wife of indiscretions while he is busy not one hundred yards away; still another will insist that his wife ride a horse at his side (an unwomanly occupation) so he can keep her within sight. Some will refuse to enter the Horn Society, because they feel unable to suppress their jealousy, as they are expected to do during their term of membership. A man will quickly, and often with little reason, accuse a brother of being his wife's lover. "You may joke," they say, "with your *taka*'s wife, but if you

[187] Maximilian, *Travels*, p. 253.
[188] *Idem*.
[189] Letter to Harry D. Biele in September, 1939.

11: Gold Rank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6 Blood

joke with your brother's, it means you are in earnest." The only Blood confined to the insane asylum, whose case was not complicated by physical causes, attempted to murder his wife because he believed she was having intercourse with a ghost. Many a husband, approaching his end, threatens his mate with death, for only when she accompanies him on his final journey can he be sure that in the next world he alone will possess her.

Husbands, who need proof of good behavior and who can afford to pay for it, may insist that their wives "vow the tongues"[190] or put up the Sun Lodge, for only those who are chaste before and faithful after marriage can do so with impunity. Sometimes, however, the pressure may be so great, that a woman must take a chance. Urged by her husband who remained unconvinced concerning her virginity at marriage, Weasel Girl distributed the tongues at the Sun Dance. Her husband's uncle, noting that she failed to mention the names of any men she had rebuffed, suspected her avowal, and threw his piece of meat to a dog at his side. Later that evening, this dog was shot while making off with a chicken. His alertness and caution had saved him, the uncle was certain, from a sure and untimely death. That Weasel Girl, herself, only lived three years longer was further evidence that she had lied.

Suspicion is not always without cause, as it may well have been in this instance. The most casual encounter, the social dances in the dance hall, even the Sun Dance, offer innumerable opportunities for illicit adventures, and these are not missed. Many a husband has found his wife with her lover. But so obsessed are they by their suspicions, that every possibility of adultery immediately becomes a fact.

Informal wife-lending among the Blood is inconceivable whether to a casual friend[191] or a life-long "*taka*." Yet this act which cannot be tolerated in daily living, is ritually sanctioned when the sorcery roots are purchased by members in the Horn Society.[192] At this time, the wife of the buyer deposits her clothes in her husband's lap. Protected by a buffalo robe, she is taken to the tipi of the seller and ceremonially painted. She then "goes

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[190] Wissler, *Blackfoot Sun Dance*, p. 234 ff.

[191] Henry in his Journal (vol. 2, p. 526) states that the Blackfoot were a "nuisance in offering women." Wissler (*Social Life*, p. 10) observes that he believes these women were captives.

[192] Among the neighboring Cree the opposite situation existed. They practised informal wife exchange. D. G. Mandelbaum (*The Plains Cree*, p. 246) writes: "This relationship reflected considerable honor upon the participants, for only the most stout-hearted men could become intimate companions of their wives' paramours." But in a ceremony called Sitting Up Until Morning (*ibid.*, p. 228) although the "warriors of one society issued invitations to the wives or daughters of the members of other societies" and "at dawn, the men washed and painted the women's faces,

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

on the sacred walk."[183] Returning, she gives the sinister root which she has received from her nocturnal partner to her uneasy husband.

The interval of waiting is among the greatest trials of the Blood. The anxious husband must show no jealousy during the "walk"; he must joke with his fellow members and suffer their teasing without taking offense. So great is this strain that some are unable to bring themselves to the test; others hire a substitute wife, although the added cost may be considerable.

The Blood are not overly engrossed with sorcery, perhaps because black magic may act as a boomerang, perhaps because hostility is quickly and overtly expressed, perhaps because their way of life brought numerous and tangible rewards. But some standard of values is suggested by the fact that the greatest power to hurt others is acquired by submitting to what they believe entails the greatest personal suffering—the possession of one's wife by another. Its institutionalization in the Horn Society in no way relaxes the sexual tensions among the people at large; it merely succeeds in heightening them for the few who want to purchase the most feared power available to the Blood.

Writing on the relations between Blackfoot men and women, Wissler observes, "We found no traces of the conventional modes of registering conquests as among the young men of the Dakota and Village Indians."[184] Victims of a monotonous poverty, these more easterly tribesmen readily transferred a symbol from their glamorous past to the one remaining area of competition, sex. The counting of coups over amorous successes may well have seemed unnecessary, and even ridiculous, to the more exuberant Blood whose daily routines gave them many other ego satisfactions.

MARITAL INSTABILITY.—Psychopathic possessiveness and aggressive behavior, however, offer a poor foundation for a satisfactory or enduring marriage. In 1909, a worried agent, after discussing the difficulties arising from drink, observed, "The morality question is at present a more serious one on this reservation, the transgressors very principally young married people who, after quarrelling separate and insist upon availing themselves of the old tribal right to take other partners."[185] The instability of early marriage can be easily documented. A Dancing Bird, beautiful if undiscriminating, consoled ten "husbands"; a wilful Mary Red Bear boasted

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combed their hair, and gave them a gift. . .no sexual license is permitted during this occasion."

The attitudes and values of the two tribes are nicely revealed in the following incident from a tale: A Blackfoot visiting a Cree makes him a present of a horse. In return, the Cree offers him his wife.

[183] Cf. Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, p. 413 ff. Also Harry D. Biele, Field Notes.

[184] Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 9.

[185] 1909, Vol. 43, No. 15, p. 169.

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

The men are stripped to their breech cloth and moccasins and painted all over with red paint by their ceremonial fathers and transferrers.[1] In the meantime, the wives of the fathers and sons exchange clothes behind curtains held up by the wives of the transferrers. The son's wife is then brought forward and given two suits of clothing, one for the son (her husband) and one for the transferrer; she also takes the lance and other regalia for the son. She goes to the entrance to the enclosure and waits. Then the transferrer rises and followed by the son, walks slowly in a stooped position, and on reaching her each kisses her and receives the clothing in turn. The woman then takes the lance and other regalia to the rear of the enclosure where she plants the former and hangs up the latter. Then she and the two men take their seats, the latter dressing themselves in their new clothes. During all this the father keeps his seat. Each son, his wife, and the transferrer go through the above procedure in turn.

At the same time the son's friends bring in horses, blankets, and other property to pay the father. Here also the transaction for each individual is separate. This accomplished, the whole body enters a large tipi previously set up inside the camp circle where they sit and sing the songs for the sons, or new members.

After a time they emerge and march entirely around the camp circle, sun-wise. The two riders now use their horses. Four times they pause and dance, the signal is given by the two horsemen riding back and forth in front of the column. Having made the circuit, they proceed to the center of the camp where the mounted bearer of the black lance invites some one to come forward and recount four deeds with the lance. If the members present cannot do this, an outsider must be called in. Then they dance once again; after which the women take the lances and headdresses and dance with them.

In all dances the man with the arrow on his headdress leads.

After a time a herald goes about the camp ordering everybody to keep close indoors, for the secret ceremony of the horns is to take place. The new members gather in a large tipi "to be painted by their fathers." The fathers, or the old members remain in their own tipis, but the transferrers meet with the sons. The wife of a son is directed to undress and cover herself with a robe. A small pipe is filled with tobacco. (One was obtained among the Blood, Fig. 22.) The woman extends her hands under the robe and holds the pipe horizontally with the bowl on her right side. She goes out and enters the tipi of her husband's ceremonial father, sits down at his left and offers him the pipe. He takes it, holds it up, and prays; then lights it and smokes. When burnt out, he refills it and hands it back to the woman. (The woman has been instructed as to her part.) The father then leaves the tipi with the woman. Once outside they walk slowly abreast, but some six feet apart. The father watches closely for if the woman stumbles, he must turn back at once, leaving her to return to her husband. When the two are out some distance the woman again hands the pipe to the father. Again, he takes it and prays, but does not smoke. The woman then reclines on her back with her feet together. Vestem mulier ita plicat ut genitalia sola aperta suit.[A] The father places a piece of prairie-turnip in his mouth and stands first at the woman's feet upon which he spits; then at her right, then at the head, and finally at the left. The woman lies as if dead.

[1] In the transfer each individual sells to one other in the same fashion as with medicine bundles, Vol. 7, 272. The man selling out is the father to the purchaser, and there is a third man, or transferrer.

A. [See p. 416-A for a translation--Analyst]
A

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Pater ad mulieris pedes iterum accedit flectitque super eam. Tunc, manibus suis in lumbos muleris impositis, genua ad eius femora collocat et facit sic ut membrum suum visile vulvam eius attingat: quo facto (ad pedes) surgit.[A]

Now, the ceremony may end here at the option of the father. If not he goes again to her feet. Primum in formana cornus digitum vir curvat: deinde, uno femore in sinistram partem amoto, bisontis modo mugit; postremo, altero femore in dextram partem amoto mulierem futuere incipit.[B] As he does so the father spits into the woman's mouth with the piece of turnip in his own. The father then returns to his tipi, while the woman holding the pipe as before goes to the door of the meeting place. There she stands until someone comes out to see who is there. When her name is announced, the transferrer and her husband go to the door. She then enters, being careful not to touch the sides of the door. The transferrer kisses her, receiving the turnip into his mouth. He also takes the pipe still filled. Then her husband kisses her.

The transferrer asks if she has been properly painted, and she answers according to the completeness of the preceding ceremony. If the ceremony was complete, the pipe she carried is lighted and passed. The woman is put to bed, still covered with her robe, where she must lie quietly until the next day.

All the wives of members must go through with this during the same evening.

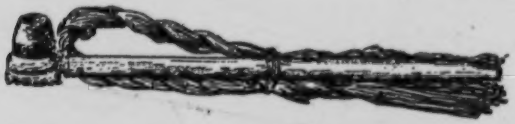

Fig. 22 (50-5401a). A Pipe used by a Blood Woman in the Transfer Ceremony, for the Hora Society. Length, 30 cm.

The next morning camp is moved. The women are taken up and placed upon travois, the horses being led by their husbands. During all this time the women must fast and abstain from drink. They must be helped on and off the travois, etc. After camp is pitched, the women each go to their fathers' tipis to be painted. He mixes up red and blue paints. The woman takes off her robe, but holds a corner over the pubes. The father smears her entire body with red paint. With the blue paint he marks a half moon on her breast. Then a circle on her back with either blue or yellow paint. On the crown of her head, he places some plumes. A blue circle is drawn around the face, a cross of the same on the left cheek and a dot on the right. (The men paint the same way.) A blue mark is made around each wrist and each ankle.

When painted the woman returns to her tipi, dresses, breaks her fast and resumes her daily life. Should the father fail to complete the ceremony the woman's face is painted differently. The left half is yellow and the right blue. On the yellow side is made a cross of blue, on the right a dot of yellow. Around the left wrist and ankle is a yellow band, around the right a blue band. Thus all may know by the painting.

After this the father prays over some pemmican mixed with back fat and berries and gives it to the woman. She takes it home and distributes it to her relatives.

The mounted bearer of the white lance seems to be under obligations to complete the ceremony. Mulier cum viro egreditur. Velut autra, sic mulier nunc decumbit;

A, B. [See p. 416-A for a translation--Analyst]

000 [A very free translation has been made by HRAF of the passages in Latin on pages 413, 415 and 416. The translation has been complicated by apparent misprints in the Latin text and the use of words not found in any Latin dictionary available to the translator. Therefore, the researcher is advised to use these translations with extreme caution.]

561 Page 413.

575 The woman folds her clothing in such a manner that the genitals
796 alone are uncovered.
432

[831] Page 415:

The father approaches the feet of the woman again and bends over them. Then, having placed his hands on the shoulders (?)
[831] [lumeros=humeros(?)] of the woman, he places his knees at her thighs and does thus so that he touches his male (?) [visile=virile(?)] member to her vulva: that done he gets up to his feet.

[833] First, the man bends his fingers in the shape(?) [formana] of a horn: then, having moved one thigh over to the left side, he bellows like a bison; finally, having moved the other thigh to the right side, he commences to have carnal connection with the woman.

[833] The woman is marched out with the man. Just as (??) [autra], thus the woman now lies down; [416] the man, on the other hand, places the pipe(?) [pipam] near the head of the woman, moreover, having taken off (?) [alrepta] his tunic, gives full rein to his passion (?) [libidiui].

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

606 food for us. She would just call us from outside and say: "Here is something already cooked, for you to eat." That was the old custom. Or she would tell me to come by her tipi later
602 in the day. When I had time I would go over there and she would have a new pair of beaded moccasins for my father-in-law. That was another custom, that the wife's mother made moccasins for the husband's father. When I went to get them I couldn't stay and visit long, because back then it was considered improper for me to be anywhere for long besides my own household. In those days respectful women were not seen idle around the camps, visiting and talking.

831 There were some women in my younger days who were well
848 known for their loose ways. They were usually older women, past my own age group. Often they were divorced or widowed. The people had various expressions for them. They would say: "She has a light child" (fathered by someone in town) or "She has been gotten between," or "This one has a white father." Women like this usually kept to themselves, because their friends would be ashamed of them. In my young time we didn't really know much about this, we just heard about it. We didn't know the details for ourselves except as rumors. Nowadays nobody thinks much about this same kind of behavior, because it goes on so much. That is one of the signs of how much life has changed in my time.

THE TIME THE NUNS BROUGHT US TO THE SUN DANCE

by Paula Weasel Head

796 This happened when my sister and I were still quite young, and we were students at the boarding school. It was summertime and the people were camped at the Sun Dance grounds. We were all wanting to go there. I was terribly lonesome for my father, who was camping there too.

Buffalo Robes

In the daytime, save for the shouting of children at play, the great camp was quiet; but with the setting of the sun it livened up. Men began shouting invitations to their friends to come and feast and smoke with them. Members of the various branches of the *Ikuni Kahtsi* (All Friends warriors society) got together to sing and dance. At once in a hundred lodges there were various social gatherings—gatherings of old men, young men, old women, young women, chiefs and leading warriors, Sun priests. Evening always found me joining one or another of the lodge-fire circles to listen to the talk, and so I heard great tales of war, of hunting, and of the wondrous doings of the gods. In greatest demand were the tellers of humorous stories; they had so many invitations to social gatherings that they were rarely found at home. And theirs was clean humor; one never heard any obscenity in the lodges of the Blackfoot tribes.

What George Catlin had to say of the Mandans he visited in 1832—that they were kindly, courteous hosts—was equally true of the old-time Blackfeet. A man giving a feast-and-smoke stepped outside his lodge and shouted his invitations. One by one the guests came and were seated according to their standing in the tribe. The more prominent a man was—such as chief, Sun priest, warrior—the nearer he would be placed to the host. When all were seated, the women of the lodge placed dishes of food, the choicest that they had—boiled or broiled buffalo tongues, buffalo dorsal ribs, berry pemmican, stewed berries—before them, and the host, not eating, began cutting finely a mixture of tobacco for the smokes. At the same time he started the talk about something of general interest, or, perhaps, called on a certain one to tell of some thrilling experience he had had in hunting or at war; or, as often happened, a Sun priest would talk about the gods or relate a powerful vision that the gods had given him in the night. As the talk went on, all ate slowly, moderately, and in most pleasant manner, of their portions. Contrary to the general opinion of them, the Indians, anyhow the Blackfeet, were not gorgers of great quantities of food.

When all had finished eating, the host passed the filled big-stone bowl with its long stem to someone of the circle to light from the fire—always a Sun priest if one were present—and he, touching a coal

33: Bradley G-3 (1871-1877) 1923
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

142 The women are not above the ordinary height, have an intelligent appearance, are seldom, if ever handsome and rarely even good-looking. When young they have a fresh, pleasant expression, but it rapidly disappears under the burdens that custom imposes on their sex, and in old age they are haggard and ugly.

CHASTITY

684 562 [83] Chastity of the women is held in great esteem among the Blackfeet, but is practiced by scarcely more than one-third of their number. The unfaithful wife was formerly punished with great severity. The injured husband or any chosen friend might cut off her nose, her ears, or even take [175] her life. Cut noses were very common among the women in 1833, when for the first time the whites made the close [178] acquaintance of the nation. Since then the custom has gradually died out and seems now to be wholly discontinued. But severe as was this penalty a still greater might be inflicted upon the woman thus disgraced. Even without the sanction of her husband she might be forcibly removed from the village by the young men who then upheld the honor of her sex by making her an object of common gratification. After such an ordeal, if permitted to live, 672 she was regarded with universal scorn. Frequently, how- 684 ever, the unfaithful wife was forgiven by her husband, 562 who sought his redress from her partner in crime. It was his privilege to dispossess him of horses, arms, and in short, everything he may own, and for property thus taken there was no reclamation. Should the paramour be unmarried and without an establishment of his own then redress may be sought from his father.

[431] There was no other recognized punishment for the male criminal, but, as occurred sometimes in civilized society, he was occasionally slain by the injured husband, who then made peace with the relatives of the victim by the [628] customary gifts. When all the parties belonged to the [621] same band, the matter was usually arranged without much difficulty, but when two different bands it became almost a national dispute and scenes of bloody violence were an occasional outcome.

54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

kerchiefs because it might have some bugs or leaves in it. [An ancient Blackfoot belief held that for a man to drink from a vessel containing leaves or other sediment was to endanger his manhood. This superstition was later extended to include drinking from a cup which contains tea leaves or coffee grounds.]

From the coulee we went on to the place where Bad Head had been killed, and from there we traveled all night and reached Writing-on-Stone. [The Writing-on-Stone (*Ah-sin-náep:* It is Written), located in Canada in the Upper Sweetgrass Hills, is a cliff wall bearing pictographs and petroglyphs of ancient but otherwise uncertain origin.] As we approached Writing-on-Stone, Prairie Chicken Old Man scouted ahead to see whether there were any Mounties around. [This was a good place to be watchful for cops because it was common knowledge that Canadian Indian war parties would visit the Stone whenever possible before making a raid. The Indians believed that the fortunes of the war party could be read in the writing on the wall, and an unfavorable reading was often sufficient to send a war party skedaddling right back home.]

Prairie Chicken Old Man did not spot any police, so we made our camp near Writing-on-Stone. But no sooner had we gotten settled than we heard a noise. It was daylight now, but very foggy, and we did not have any field glasses. So when we heard

Crazy Crow